

gobar times

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A DOWN TO EARTH SUPPLEMENT FOR THE YOUNG AND CURIOUS

GREEN SPACE

Ads with a Purpose – Inspiring
Environmental Action for a
Greener Future

ADVERTISER

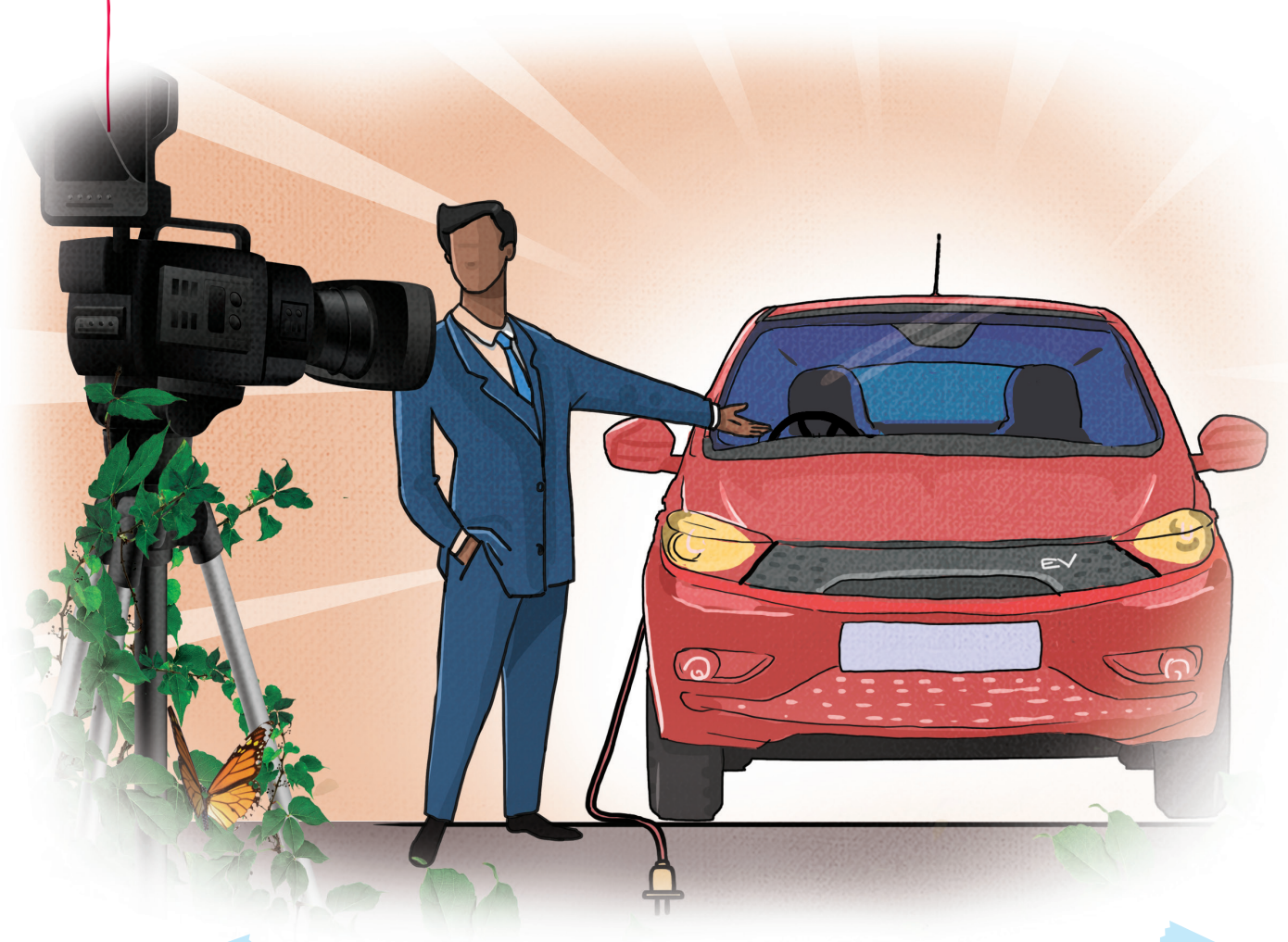


The Green Sheen in Advertising



**Dharmendra
Singh**

Some ads are starting to do more than just sell products. They're also trying to raise awareness about environmental issues.



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Have you ever watched a TV commercial and felt good about a product or company? Maybe it made you laugh, or maybe it made you think. But did you ever think about how a commercial might also make you care about the environment?

That's what we're talking about here – ads that are not just about selling stuff but also about caring for our planet. It's called environmental consciousness in advertising.

What is Environmental Consciousness?

Being environmentally conscious means thinking about how our actions affect the world around us. It could be about reducing waste, saving energy, or protecting our natural resources. Relatively a larger percentage of people now seem to care about the environment. And, because of this, more companies are wanting their ads to show that they too are worried about the planet. They're talking about how they are trying to be greener, like creating less waste or using clean energy. And, advertisement that sells is considered a good advertisement by the companies. So, if 'Environment' as a theme catches attention and creates a goodwill for the company or brand it is but natural to be used by companies in their advertisements. This is in an attempt to make people like the company more and want to buy their things. From the consumer perspective however, it's not just about selling products anymore; companies must also demonstrate that they care

about people and the world.

Ads and the Environment

Ads are everywhere – on TV, on the internet, on billboards, and even on our phones. They try to convince us to buy things, from fashion accessories to gadgets to cars to almost anything and everything. But some ads are starting to do more than just sell products. They're also trying to raise awareness about environmental issues.

These ads often show us the problems our planet is facing, like pollution, deforestation, and climate change. They also show us how we can help, by making small changes in our

often highlight eco-friendly materials and energy-efficient designs. Patagonia's 'Don't Buy This Jacket' was a bold campaign that encouraged consumers to think about the environmental impact of their purchases and to buy only what they truly need. Then there's the Dove campaign – while not strictly environmental, the campaign promotes body positivity and self-esteem, encouraging a more sustainable approach to beauty standards.

In India, Tata Tea's 'Jaago Re' campaign has been instrumental in raising awareness about various social issues, including environmental

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daily lives. For example, an ad might show us how to recycle, save water, or use less energy. Such 'Green' Ads can have a big impact. They can:

- raise awareness and bring environmental issues top-of-mind.
- inspire people to make positive changes.
- encourage businesses to be more sustainable.
- create political will and influence decision-makers to create enabling policies and regulations.

There are some good examples of environmental consciousness in advertising. IKEA for example has been a pioneer in sustainable furniture and home goods. Their ads

concerns. By addressing problems like illiteracy, corruption, and child labor, the campaign indirectly contributes to a better environment. Similarly, Tanishq's 'Jewellery Recycling' campaign encouraged customers to recycle old gold jewellery, reducing the environmental impact of gold mining.

Environment as a Hot-Button for Advertising

Hot-Buttons in the advertising world refer to platforms that cut across geographies, race and cultures to create universal acceptance. In Indian context, the Hot-Buttons that one may see applied mostly, are:

- Cricket

Cover Story

- Cinema
- Politics
- Religion, and
- Family

Most ads are made using one of the above as an underlying theme in their construct.

Remember, a chocolate ad that said ‘Kuchch khaas hai zindagi main’ (*cricket*)?

Or a detergent ad showing Holi festival being played by both Hindu & Muslim families (religion)?

Likewise, if you notice carefully, all ads will find a basis in one or the other of the Hot-Buttons mentioned above. In recent times, there is growing evidence to suggest that ‘Environment’ too is fast becoming a Hot-Button. It can be the main subject being

talked about in an ad. Or it can be the underlying theme of an advertisement even though the main subject being talked about is something else.

Two paths to a Greener Brand Image

Brands or companies can approach environmental consciousness in advertising in two primary ways.

1. The company or brand can focus on their internal practices, highlighting eco-friendly production processes, usage of sustainable materials, or energy-efficient operations. For instance, a detergent brand might emphasize its biodegradable formula and plant-based ingredients. Or a shoe company can emphasize upon its use of plastic waste in manufacturing its products.

2. Brands can adopt a cause-related marketing approach, aligning with a specific environmental issue to create a larger impact. A water purifier company, for example, could partner with an NGO to address water scarcity, using the campaign to promote their product's ability to provide clean drinking water.

Cause-Related Marketing for the Environment

Cause-related marketing is when a company supports a social or environmental cause in partnership with a non-profit organization. This can be a powerful way for brands to build a positive image and connect with consumers who care about the environment.

A well-known dairy co-operative in India, has been actively involved in sustainable practices. Their focus on farmer welfare, animal care, and environmentally friendly dairy production aligns well with the growing consumer interest in ethical and sustainable products. While not a specific campaign, their overall approach to sustainability can be seen as a form of cause-related marketing.

Here's how brands can adopt a cause-related marketing approach:

○ Choose a Relevant Cause:

Select an environmental issue that aligns with the brand's values and target audience.

○ Create a Strong

Partnership: Work closely with a reputable environmental organization to develop a mutually beneficial campaign.

○ **Measure Impact:** Track the results of cause-related marketing campaign to assess its effectiveness.



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Communicate Clearly:

Clearly communicate about partnerships and the impact of their efforts.

Be Consistent: Make cause-related marketing an integral part of the brand's identity, not just a one-time event.

What Can We Do as Consumers of Products and Brands?

We can all play a role in promoting environmental consciousness. Here are a few things we can do.

Watch for green ads: Pay attention to the messages in the ads we see.

Think about issues being highlighted: Do a little homework to dig deeper in the issues; search for facts and figures; read experts' views and analysis on those topics.

Talk about environmental issues: Discuss these issues with our family and friends.

Make eco-friendly choices: Choose products that are good for the planet; adopt the reduce-reuse-recycle practices in our lives

Support companies that are doing the right thing:

Let companies know that we appreciate their efforts to be sustainable.

It's important to remember, however, that not all ads claiming to be green are truly helpful to the environment. Some companies might just say they care, but their actions don't match their words. It's called 'Greenwashing'. It occurs when a company makes exaggerated or misleading claims about their environmental practices or products to appear more eco-friendly. For example, many phone companies promise to recycle old phones and e-waste. The regulations make it

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mandatory for them to do so too, but very few actually follow this practice. To make a real difference, companies need to be honest about what they do and follow through on their promises.

By being truthful and caring about the planet, the companies and brands can win over customers and create positive change. Companies can use their power to make the world a better place. We, as consumers, on the other hand, need to be careful and watchful to see if companies are really doing what they say. By working together, we can encourage businesses to be greener and build a better

future for everyone. Together, we can keep the hope alive.

The author, based in Delhi NCR, is an Independent Consultant working for development sector projects as Communication Strategist for Social & Behaviour Change. With over three decades of experience, he has worked with top organizations like The Times of India, Maadhyam, and Ogilvy Advertising, before focusing on development projects. He has collaborated with Johns Hopkins University, World Health Partners, FHI 360, and the World Bank on key issues including public health, sanitation, hygiene, environment, and education.



Neerja Bhatnagar

Paving the Path to a Greener Future

How can schools become the catalysts for achieving sustainability?

In an era where the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation are becoming increasingly evident, the role of education in fostering a sustainable future has become more critical than ever. Schools are at the heart of their communities and can play a pivotal role in promoting sustainability beyond their own walls and **preparing students for a sustainable future.**

One of the most effective ways schools can do this is by integrating sustainability into their curricula, operations and community interactions. They can become powerful catalysts by guiding educators and students to join programmes that can train and prepare them for dealing with environmental challenges. For example, schools registered under the Centre for Science and Environment's **Green Schools Programme (GSP)** have not only started the journey to instil green values in teachers and students, but have also helped them understand today's environmental concerns.

I believe **Education for Sustainability** is not only about addressing current environmental challenges; it is also about preparing students for a future where sustainability becomes integral to all aspects of life and work. It should be a cross-curricular theme, integrated into subjects such as mathematics, literature, history and social studies. This requires a comprehensive approach to teaching and learning that goes beyond traditional environmental science classes.

★ Schools can provide guidance and resources about careers in green economy.

★ Equipping students with the skills needed for a sustainable future is essential. This includes critical thinking, systems thinking, and the ability to innovate and adapt to changing environmental conditions. This is already now in practice in the curriculum pattern, but more weightage must be given for students to be innovators

and creators to handle real-life challenges.

★ Understanding sustainability as a global issue is crucial. Schools have begun fostering this through international partnerships, exchange programmes, and global projects.

Schools are now fostering this perspective through international partnerships, exchange programs, and global sustainability projects. It still needs more force to roll on in the normal practice.

Programmes like GSP pave the path for educators to be climate leaders and messengers of green practices in schools, and prepare young minds to be green warriors as well as innovators to face the coming environmental challenges. As educators and climate leaders, we can help students and communities come together to embrace sustainability, where schools can be powerful agents of change, leading the way towards a greener, more sustainable world.

Let's join our hands together to move forward and be game changers.

The author is the Green Schools Programme Coordinator and a TGT Science, teaching Science to classes 6-10 and Chemistry to Class 11, at Bal Bharati Public School, Noida, Uttar Pradesh.



Closer to a Sustainable Lifestyle

Born out of a desire to make a difference and a positive impact on the world, let's hear about Clo_ser from the founder herself.



Amara Jain

Clo_ser stands for **C**lothes for a **S**ustainable **E**nvironment & **R**esources. It was started in June 2022. It is an initiative that focuses on sustainable fashion, utilising leftover scraps from the fashion and textiles industry; these scraps are upcycled to economically empower women and enhance their skill-based learning. The initiative also helps in preventing textile wastes from reaching landfills and joining the other kinds of wastes that are smothering our cities.

I have always been keen on sustainability and was curious to understand what happens to all the waste fabric in garment factories and how they could be put to use towards a sustainable cause. When I visited garment factories under the guidance of my parent's friends who were either entrepreneurs or

ran factories in the concerned industries, I saw an opportunity to see things for myself. I decided to collaborate with one of these factories to put unused textile pieces to use – for making saleable items like t-shirts, sweatshirts and hoodies; I gradually expanded into the home décor segment as well. Collections were created based on the available fabrics and after mapping trends, colours, designs and consumer preferences.

The proceeds from the sale of these items have helped in providing stitching and tailoring training to about 200 underprivileged girls in the Gurgaon-Rewari region. In collaboration with SNS Foundation—the corporate social responsibility arm of the ANAND Group—my organization also funded their training courses that teach life skills, communication skills etc. for grooming them for future employment. Some of these girls and women have helped with making bags from textile leftovers for packaging the

products. In 2022, sweatshirts from our winter collection were also supplied to Stears, an NGO in Kashmir dedicated to providing vocational training to students, to cope with severe winters.

In another project, I have collected old and used office uniforms; in collaboration with Clothes Box Foundation—an organization dedicated to clean clothing—these have been repurposed into utility pouches and bags. This has not only saved tonnes of fabric from going to waste, but also saved valuable resources. As calculated by the Clothes Box Foundation, this initiative has prevented 17,392.67 kgCO₂e, and saved 977.83 kilolitres of water, contributing to mitigating climate change.

This is a small contribution from me to make a difference, and to make this world a better place.

The author is a student of Class XII, Shri Ram School, Mousari, Gurugram, Haryana.





MURDER MUBARAK

Mangroves are nature's superheroes! Found along India's coastlines, they protect shores from big storms, tsunamis, and erosion with their strong roots. They filter out water impurities and sequester carbon, helping in the fight against climate change. Mangroves are also home to amazing creatures like Bengal tigers, Gangetic dolphins, and various birds! But they're in danger. Pollution, shrimp farms, and urbanization are destroying these magical forests. We need to act fast to save them from being murdered—by replanting them, protecting their habitats, and raising awareness—because mangroves are more than just trees; they're lifelines for our coasts!